Group home fire drill log

A free template for house managers and training leads, from Special Learning. Fill in one record for each drill, then the running log. Which rule applies, how often to drill and on which shifts is set by your state, your setting and your funder: write yours in the first box. This template does not replace your licensing rule or your fire marshal.

Our home and our rule

Home or site name	
House manager	
The rule that applies to us (name and where to find it)	
What it says about how often and which shifts (copy it, do not guess)	
Meeting place outside	
Where the recordings and this log are kept	

This drill

Date	
Time the alarm sounded or the scenario began	
Shift (day, evening, overnight, weekend or relief)	
Alarm or simulated scenario (what set it off, what was blocked or different)	
Exit and route used	
Time to evacuate (from the alarm until everyone was at the meeting place)	
Observer, who timed it and did not take part in the evacuation	

Who needed what support

Person	Support they needed (from their notes)	What staff did	Worked? Notes to update

Where this comes from: 42 CFR 483.470(i) and (j). The federal ICF/IID rule asks for special provisions for evacuating clients with physical disabilities; each person's support is in their own notes.

Problems found and the fix

Problem found	Fix	Owner	Done by (date)

Staff present and signatures

Include live-in and relief staff. The leader, the observer and the house manager sign and date.

Name	Role and shift	Signature	Date

Running drill log

One line per drill for the year. It shows at a glance which shifts and which conditions you have covered. Keep the full records and recordings with it.

Date	Time	Shift	Scenario	Exit	Time to evacuate	Problems, fix and date	Initials

My evacuation support notes

One sheet per person. Written with the person, in their words where possible, in their way of communicating. Kept where staff can find it in seconds. Review after every drill and whenever needs change.

My name (or the name I use)	
Date written, and who I wrote it with	

How I know the alarm means go *What I hear, see or feel, and what I do when I hear it. If I need to be shown, say how.*	
What helps me get out *Who I would like beside me, a word or sign that works, a hand on my arm, a picture of the exits, a buddy, my own aids or a device.*	
What I need to bring *Glasses, hearing aids, a phone, a comfort item, medication, shoes or a coat.*	
How I prefer to leave *My route, the stairs or ramp I use, and a second route if the first is blocked.*	
What staff should say and not say *The words that help me, and the ones that do not.*	
What I want practiced *How I like to practice, and anything about drills I would change.*	
Who wrote this, and when *The date, who I wrote it with, and my signature or my own way of saying yes. Review it every drill and whenever my needs change.*	

Share this only with the people who need it for an emergency, with my agreement. My signature or my own way of saying yes:

Signature or my own way of agreeing	
Reviewed on (dates)	

Where this comes from: NADSP Code of Ethics; NFPA, Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for People with Disabilities (2016), as hosted by Virginia DBHDS. Person-centered practice and dignity; a picture book of drill procedures and a buddy system are among the accommodations NFPA lists.

Rotating drills, the group debrief and a checklist

Rotation grid: tick each cell when done, with the date

Condition	Day	Evening	Overnight	Weekend or relief
Main exit blocked				
Person in bed or in the bathroom				
Alarm on, no staff at the panel				
A new or relief staff member leads				
Bad weather or after dark				

Pick the next drill from the emptiest cell. Your rule sets how often and on which shifts; this grid only tracks variety. The conditions are ours.

A 20-minute group debrief

Live, as a group, screen shared and recorded. Staff training is group training. Keep the recording with the log.

Time	Min.	Part	What to do
0:00	2	**Open**	Say what we are doing: the drill tests the plan, not the people. No blame. Recording starts.
0:02	5	**Walk the log**	Share your screen. The leader reads the timeline from the log: alarm, who went where, time to the meeting place.
0:07	5	**Each person's support**	For each person who took part, open their notes. Ask: did what we did match the notes? What worked, and what should the notes say now?
0:12	4	**Problems and fixes**	List every problem found. Give each one an owner and a date. Do not solve it by blaming one person.
0:16	4	**Sign and schedule**	Everyone signs the log. Pick the next drill's shift and condition from the grid, and the date to update any notes.

Checklist

☐ I know which rule applies to our home (federal, state licensing, fire marshal, funder) and what it says about how often and on which shifts.

☐ Each person has current evacuation support notes, written with them, and each shift can find them in seconds.

☐ The next drill's shift and condition are picked from the rotation grid.

☐ A staff member is named to observe and time it, and does not take part in the evacuation.

☐ We record the date, time, shift, scenario, exit, time to evacuate, support given, problems and fixes, staff present and signatures.

☐ The group debrief is live, screen shared and recorded, and held the same day where we can.

☐ Every problem has an owner and a date, and the fix is on the next drill's agenda.

☐ Live-in and relief staff, and new hires, have taken part in a drill.

☐ Notes were reviewed after the drill and updated if the person's needs changed.

What the rules say, sources and one next step

These are examples of how different the rules are. Do not copy any one number into your own log. Use your own licensing rule, your funder's contract and your fire marshal's requirements; our state finder links each state's DSP training rule and agency. We did not find one national frequency for every group home.

Rule	What it says
Federal, ICF/IID only.	Evacuation drills at least quarterly for each shift, under varied conditions; at least one drill each year on each shift must actually evacuate clients; a report and evaluation on each; problems investigated with corrective action. Fire protection follows the Life Safety Code, including its Residential Board and Care chapter where the facility fits it (42 CFR 483.470(i), (j)).
NFPA 101 (2006 edition), residential board and care, as summarized in a handout.	The handout lists drills "not less than six times per year on a bimonthly basis," with "two drills conducted during the night when residents are sleeping," announced in advance to residents when permitted, and the actual evacuation of residents to an assembly point. Which edition and chapter apply to a home is your state fire marshal's call, so use this only to see what the code looks like.
Minnesota (example, DD license).	The emergency plan must include "procedures for conducting quarterly drills each year and recording the date of each drill," the license holder must "maintain a log of quarterly fire drills on file in the facility," and the plan must include "an emergency escape plan for each resident."
Oregon (example, residential care and assisted living rule, not IDD-specific).	A drill "at least once every 90 calendar days, with at least one evacuation drill per year conducted during sleeping hours," "clearly documented, signed by the caregiver conducting the drill," and caregivers must be able to evacuate all occupants to the initial point of safety "within three minutes or less."
Ohio (example, residential care facility rule, not IDD-specific).	A written record and evaluation of each fire drill that includes "the date, time, staff member attendance, method of activation, effectiveness of the drill procedures, number of individuals evacuated, total time for evacuation, and the weather conditions during the evacuation."
Texas (example, a special care facility rule, not IDD-specific).	For new residential board and care facilities, drills quarterly "with not less than two drills conducted during the night when residents are sleeping," documented "on a form," with "an evaluation of each drill with respect to the fire plan."

State finder: https://special-learning.com/for-organizations/behavioral-health/state-required-dsp-training-hours/

Where each part comes from

Sources read November 16, 2026 (the eCFR text is current as of November 12). The log fields as a set, time to evacuate, rotation grid, debrief outline, support notes sheet and checklist are Special Learning's; the quoted lines are as published. Minnesota, Oregon, Ohio and Texas are examples only. None of these organizations has reviewed or endorsed this template.

42 CFR 483.470(i) and (j). https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-42/chapter-IV/subchapter-C/part-483/subpart-I/section-483.470
42 CFR 483.475(d). https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-42/chapter-IV/subchapter-C/part-483/subpart-I/section-483.475
Comparison of the 2006 Life Safety Code (NFPA 101) with the 2024 IBC/IFC. https://lks.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/AgingUpdate/2026AU/IFC%20-%20LSC%20Board%20%26%20Care%20Analysis.26.pdf
NFPA, Emergency Evacuation Planning Guide for People with Disabilities (2016), as hosted by Virginia DBHDS. https://dbhds.am.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/H-31-Evacuation-Guide-PDF-2016-NFPA.pdf
Minnesota Statutes 245D.22, subdivision 5 (example). https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/245D.22
Oregon Administrative Rules 411-050-0725(3) (example). https://oregon.public.law/rules/oar_411-050-0725
Ohio Administrative Code 3701-16-13(K) to (M) (example). https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/ohio/Ohio-Admin-Code-3701-16-13
26 Texas Administrative Code 506.83(h) (example). https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/texas/26-Tex-Admin-Code-SS-506-83
NADSP Code of Ethics. https://nadsp.org/resources/the-nadsp-code-of-ethics/

One next step

If your staff support autistic people, the Level 1 ABA Online Training Course for groups introduces autism and behavior-support foundations. $99 per learner · One-time purchase · Each learner has 12 weeks of access from the day they activate their code · Free 7-day trial of the first 2 sessions.

Related free tools: Find your state's DSP training rule · DSP incident report template · DSP shift change report template · One-page profile template · Staff training sign-in sheet · DSP training and HR toolkit